GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4804
ANSWERED ON:20.12.2000
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX
RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA;TEJVEER SINGH

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether India ranks lowest in the World in terms of Human Development Index asper the report of the U.N.D.P. relating to Human Resource Development;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and (

(c) the strategy being contemplated by the Government in order to bring India at par with the World standard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF PLANNING, STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE)

(a & b): UNDP Human Development Report 2000 placed India in the group of medium human development countries with an overall rank of 128 out of a total of 174 countries.

(c): The parameters used for measuring the human development index are life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate, combined enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education and adjusted per capita income in purchasing power parity in US dollars.

Life expectancy has gone up from 37 years to 62 years in the last 50 years. In order to improve the health status of our population, several steps are being taken to address the problem including improvement in health care infrastructure and personnel, provision of reproductive and child health care, provision of family planning services, specially to meet the unmet need for contraception, to reduce infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 by 2010, and reduce maternal mortality rate, achieve universal immunisation of children, and prevent and control communicable diseases.

While literacy has also gone up considerably in the last 50 years; as per the 1991 census, it was still as low as 52%. The latest available data from the NSSO show that literacy had gone up to 62% by 1997. Eradication of illiteracy is a priority with provision of free and compulsory education upto elementary stage. Towards this end improvement in physical infrastructure, appointment of additional teachers and provision of teaching/learning materials will be given priority, particularly in the areas where there are gaps in achievement.

Public investment in both health and education has gone up considerably in the last five years. The Central outlays for health and family welfare increased from Rs.1535 crore in 1996-97 to Rs.3520 crore in 2000-01. The Central expenditure on elementary education was Rs.4006 crore in the Eighth Plan period. The Central outlay for elementary education was increased to Rs.16370 crore in the Ninth Plan period.

In addition, India has achieved a growth of about 6% in the last three years. All efforts are being made to increase the rate of growth further.